Overview | Comic books use balloons to indicate speech, but you can often get other information from them as well, such as tone of speech, volume, inflection, and accent. Together with your class you will do a close reading of *Stinky*, paying particular attention to speech balloons, followed by an activity to demonstrate student comprehension.

Subject | English Language Arts

Grade Level | 1-2

Suggested Time | 45 minutes

Materials | Pens, pencils, notebook paper.

Objectives | Students will improve their reading comprehension by learning to use visual context clues and text features to understand the story’s progression.

Before Reading: | Briefly review (or teach) graphic text features such as word balloons, thought bubbles, and sound effects. Highlight the analogous ways that prose text identifies speakers and dialogue (e.g., quotation marks, the word said, etc.) to help transfer the outcomes of this lesson to literacy skills more generally.

Activate prior knowledge thematically, by having students share experiences of being the “new kid” in a group or place, or, conversely, of welcoming a newcomer. Explore the conflicting feelings such situations evoke as a way of previewing the emotions of the main characters. To engage readers further, you might solicit examples of ostensibly “yucky” or “gross” things that students actually like, thus creating a connection to the character Nick.

Reading: | For emerging readers to practice fluency, previous exposure to the content is often critical. That’s because on a first reading it can be difficult to decode, read for basic comprehension, and to read expressively all at the same time. With this in mind, consider various strategies for efficiently covering a first-read: by reading aloud most passages yourself as students follow along, by having students read each spread silently before addressing it as a group, or by assigning the entire book (perhaps chapter by chapter) for homework or as a reading center activity.

Chapter 1: On the splash page, draw attention to the way both the balloon shape and the lettering signal that a reader should “yawn” before saying the dialogue. Similarly, point out the “zzz”-for-snoring convention on the same page. As volunteers take turns reading aloud each page or spread, support their expressiveness by explaining how text features suggest volume, intonation, pitch and emotion.

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*Stinky*

*by Eleanor Davis*

*Hardcover ISBN: 978-0-9799238-4-5*

*Guided Reading Level = J*

*Lexile Level = 170*
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Draw a balloon around the words. Use a shape that matches what the speaker feels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HELP ME!</th>
<th>We need to be very quiet...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I love you!</td>
<td>I think MONSTERS are in here.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now write some words in Stinky’s balloons. You can make up your own ideas, but make sure they have the right feelings.